



# Focus

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## ***Ecology's Underground Storage Tank Program will Continue into 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

Governor Locke recently signed Senate Bill 6130, giving Ecology the authority to regulate underground storage tanks for another ten years – until the year 2009. The new law will become effective in June.

Many parts of the new law remain the same, but there are changes that will affect owners and operators of underground storage tanks.

### **What's New in the Law**

● **Facility Compliance Tagging:** This fall, Ecology will begin issuing one-time “facility compliance tags” to owners and operators of underground storage tanks who have completed all of the following:

- 1. Upgraded or replaced tank(s) and piping to meet the December 22, 1998 requirements for overfill, spill and corrosion protection;*
- 2. Purchased pollution liability insurance;*
- 3. Paid annual license fees.*

One tag per facility will be issued. The tag should be displayed either on the fire emergency shutoff device or in close proximity to fill pipes.

The purpose of “facility compliance tagging” is to make it easier for oil distributors, Ecology inspectors and the public to distinguish which facilities have met the requirements mentioned above and are qualified to receive product. If an owner or operator does not have a “facility compliance tag” in place by December 22, 1998, the facility will not legally be able to receive product. Distributors will be in violation of the law for delivering product to these facilities.

Ecology is currently updating its database to reflect facilities that meet all of the requirements and are eligible to receive a “facility compliance tag.” In upcoming months, owners or operators who have not upgraded or replaced their tank and piping systems will receive certified letters from Ecology to inform them of their status.

**\*\*** If you're an owner or operator of an underground storage tank(s) who has completed the December 22, 1998, requirements and are unsure whether or not Ecology has received your paperwork, please call the regional Ecology office in which your site is located. It's important that Ecology receive this information without delay.

Please be aware that if an owner or operator does not have tank(s) and piping upgraded, replaced, permanently closed or acquired approval for temporary closure by December 22, 1998, Ecology has the authority to initiate enforcement actions.

● **Increased License Fees:** Another change to the law that will affect owners and operators is an increase in annual license fees. Starting this July, license fees will increase from \$75 to \$100 per tank. The fee increase was needed to maintain the level of service provided by the Underground Storage Tank Program and to implement the “facility compliance tag” requirement of the new law.

● **Change in Local Delegation:** Although not a direct affect, this change will affect owners and operators of underground storage tanks indirectly. Starting this June, Ecology will no longer be able to delegate underground storage tank enforcement to local governments – with one exception. A city, town or county may apply to Ecology to have an area designated environmentally sensitive (for example, an area near a large aquifer responsible for a city’s drinking water supply). If the area is designated environmentally sensitive, the local government may apply more stringent requirements and establish local tank fees. This exception only applies to the installation of new underground storage tanks.

#### **For More Information on Changes to the Law:**

- If your site is in Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan or Yakima counties; please call Debra Kroon (509) 454-7842 or John Wietfeld (509) 454-7836.
- If your site is in Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla or Whitman counties; please call Jim Greeves (509) 456-6385 or Roque Nalley (509) 625-5193.
- If your site is in Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish or Whatcom counties; please call Annette Ademasu (425) 649-7189, John Bails (425) 649-7094 , Karen Klocke (425) 649-7282 or Dick Storey (425) 649-7116.
- If your site is in Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston or Wahkiakum counties; please call Karen Backman (360) 407-6268, Mark Henderson (360) 407-6263 or Norm Stewart (360) 407-6264.

#### **OR**

- UST Coordinator: Barry Rogowski, (360) 407-7236.
  - Underground Storage Tank Information Line: 1-800-826-7716.
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